

men and the rate among Black women is sixteen times that of white women. More children with AIDS are African American than all other race and ethnic groups combined. There is no question that we must continue to devote considerable attention and resources to support the efforts of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day and its mission to build capacity and increase the awareness, participation and support for HIV prevention, care and treatment among African Americans in particular. For these many reasons, I urge you to support the passage of H. Con. Res. 35, National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.

While a cure for HIV/AIDS remains just beyond our reach, there are many known factors that contribute to the devastating effects that HIV/AIDS continues to have in the African American community in particular. For example, we know that the stigmatization surrounding those with HIV/AIDS deters many from being tested and learning about treatment needed to prolong their lifespan. We also know that economic issues such as the need for more inexpensive housing, substantial increases in livable wages and affordable health care, weakens community ties making it difficult to build capacity, disseminate information and target interventions. It is also evident that funds are needed to support these initiatives, perform meaningful outreach and provide organizations with the resources necessary to serve this vulnerable population.

It is important for us to increase knowledge about preventative measures, educational techniques, capacity building and outreach to find targeted solutions to the problem of HIV/AIDS in the Black Community. In the State of New York alone there are 33,747 Black Americans living with HIV/AIDS. Sadly, this number will continue to grow at exponential rates without the attention, care and resources supported by the National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. While it is important to direct resources to Black Americans and others who are disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS, we must remember that HIV/AIDS does not discriminate. It is estimated that between 1,039,000 and 1,185,000 infected persons live in the United States and approximately 40,000 new infections occur each year. Those affected belong to all gender, racial, ethnic, religious, socio economic and regional configurations. Those affected are mothers and fathers, sisters and our brothers, bosses, friends, and children.

The devastating effect of HIV/AIDS impacts us all. Confronting this international crisis will require the collective efforts of researchers, legislators, clergy members, community activists and organizations, and all others committed to reducing the force of HIV/AIDS. We must work together to find solutions that are scaleable and make possible innovations that result in value adding and sustainable positive changes.

Observance of the National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day provides an opportunity for governments, national AIDS programs, churches, community organizations and individuals to communicate the importance of the fight against HIV/AIDS. If we have any hope of ending conversations about the injurious effects of HIV/AIDS, we must immediately devote the time, energy and resources needed to educate, treat and prevent against future transmission.

RECOGNIZING MATTHEW HELM FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Matthew Helm, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 138, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Matthew has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Matthew has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Matthew Helm for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN HONOR OF VERNA M. WOOLFOLK-SLOAN

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak in honor of Verna M. Woolfolk-Sloan, who passed away on Wednesday, January 31, at the age of 81. Verna lived in Central California's Monterey County for more than 50 years. In that time she built a great record of personal, professional, and community achievement in advancing equal employment opportunity for women and minorities.

Verna was born in Providence, Kentucky and received straight A's throughout school, indicative of professional successes to come. She graduated as class Valedictorian from Rosenwald High School. Verna married Sergeant First Class Robert D. Sloan and they traveled throughout the United States and Germany with their son Joseph. They first set down roots in Seaside with her husband's 1955 posting to Fort Ord. A lifelong learner, Verna studied at Monterey Peninsula College, was awarded high honors in a Masters Degree in Business Administration from Golden Gate University, and later completed a Ph.D. in Organizational Psychology from International University.

Verna's motivation for education and equal opportunity came from her paternal grandparents, former slaves, who established Woolfolk School as the first Black secondary school in Kentucky. These principles guided her civil service career, which she began in 1956 as a simple typist, before climbing the career ladder as an accountant, manager, and ultimately Director of the U.S. Army's Equal Opportunity Office, which monitored and oversaw equal employment opportunity programs at Fort Ord and Fort McArthur. Here, she was the highest-ranking civilian employee at these bases.

Retiring after forty years of civil service employment gave Verna an opportunity to be-

come ever more deeply involved in her local community as a volunteer. She was a Golden Heritage life member, Secretary and Executive Committee member of the Monterey Peninsula's branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and held seats on the boards of many Christian, cultural, and women's organizations. Verna was a role model and inspiration to countless young women and minorities in her local Monterey County, and was recognized with a number of awards, including the Outstanding Woman of Achievement Award and the Outstanding Equal Opportunity Officer award.

She is survived by her sister Eloise Wells of Marina, her brother Thomas Woolfolk of Chicago, grandson Joseph Sloan, Jr. of Atlanta, along with numerous beloved family members, including two great great nieces, one great great nephew, and three godchildren. Many of her family are also based in Seaside or Monterey County, which will ensure her legacy is continued and her work remembered in the district.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the House, I would like to extend our Nation's deepest thanks for Verna's service to the United States and her local community. Her dedication and commitment opened the door to equal opportunity for many to whom that door would have otherwise been closed, and I know that I speak for every member of Congress when I say that it is our honor to recognize her today.

TOM MARTIN

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Ms. HARMAN. Madam Speaker, every once in a while, someone great comes along who flawlessly fills a position and epitomizes the role he or she performs. Tom Martin, long-time aide and Field Representative to Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe, is such a person.

Tom spent almost 35 years working in state and local government, retiring only after a serious health condition forced him from the job he loved. These many years of public service earned him the well-deserved nickname "Godfather of Field Deputies." It's widely acknowledged that few people in the region have done as much as Tom has for so many. And his upbeat demeanor is always matched with seemingly effortless action. For Tom, helping people has always been second-nature.

I do not think I have ever seen Tom without a smile on his face, or heard him say "no" to someone. From 1969 until his retirement in 2005, Tom worked to improve the lives of his neighbors and enhance the community. During that time, the South Bay saw many changes, but one thing remained constant: Tom was always there to listen and to assist those who came to him with their problems, concerns, and ideas.

No item was too small for Tom when it came to helping others and he seemed to involve himself in everything. He ensured that the lights would be promptly fixed in Marina del Ray. He made limiting growth at LAX and its modernization a priority. And he was instrumental in engineering the land swap that saved Los Angeles Air Force Base in the most